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Letter dated 11 November 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to address you to inform you that, on 21 October 2009, the notorious terrorist, Santiago Álvarez Fernández-Magriña, was released from prison in the United States.

Álvarez had been sentenced to prison for illegally storing hundreds of weapons together with ammunition in southern Florida, United States of America, and for obstructing justice by refusing to testify before a federal grand jury on the illegal entry into the United States of his accomplice, the infamous international terrorist, Luis Posada Carriles, responsible, among other acts, for blowing up a Cubana de Aviación aircraft in midflight and causing the death of 73 innocent civilians; for attacks on tourist facilities in Havana in 1997; and for dozens of plans financed by the United States Government to eliminate the Commander of the Cuban Revolution, Fidel Castro Ruz.

It was Santiago Álvarez who helped Posada Carriles enter the United States illegally aboard his boat the Santrina at the beginning of 2005.

It is worth pointing out that, even though Santiago Álvarez possessed an illegal weapons arsenal intended to commit terrorist acts against the people of Cuba, the United States prosecutors decided not to file charges of terrorism against him. Consequently, he was sentenced to only four years' imprisonment in a minimum security prison, a sentence that was later reduced to a mere 11 months as the result of Judge James Cohn's promise to reduce it in exchange for the voluntary handing over of another illegal cache of weapons that he had hidden.

In addition to the original illegal weapons that the police seized from Álvarez when they searched his apartment in Broward County, Miami (which included an M 11 A-1 machine gun, two Colt AR-15 rifles, a silencer and a Heckler & Koch grenade launcher), the terrorist subsequently handed over to the federal authorities in exchange for a reduced sentence another hidden cache of illegal weapons consisting of 30 automatic and semi-automatic machine guns, a grenade launcher, several grenades, more than 200 pounds of dynamite, 14 pounds of C-4 explosive

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and 4,000 feet of detonating cable. This quantity of illegal weapons in southern Florida was unprecedented, all accumulated to commit terrorist attacks against Cuba.

Santiago Álvarez has a history of terrorist acts against the Cuban people. To cite but a few: he is active as the founder of the Alfa 66 paramilitary terrorist organization, which has its base in southern Florida, United States of America; he enrolled as a mercenary in Brigada 2506, which invaded Cuba via the Bay of Pigs in 1961; and he was a major accomplice of Posada Carriles in the planning of the failed attempt in 2000 in Panama on the life of Fidel Castro Ruz, the Leader of the Cuban Revolution.

The participation of Álvarez in numerous acts of piracy against Cuba from United States territory is widely known.

On 12 October 1971, he took part in a terrorist attack against the village of Boca de Samá in the northern part of Holguín province, during which participants killed two people and wounded another two adults and two children, one of whom was seriously injured.

He tried to infiltrate a terrorist commando group into the area of Isabela de Sagua, in the province of Villa Clara, Cuba, in April 2001, with the intention of perpetrating acts of sabotage in the country. The plans that Álvarez commissioned this terrorist commando group to execute included blowing up the Tropicana nightclub in Havana, which hundreds of people frequent every night.

Cuba has publicized a recording of Santiago Álvarez, speaking from the United States, in which, unaware that Cuban authorities had arrested the members of the terrorist commando group, he orders the group to massacre Cubans and foreigners in the nightclub. "Go in through the window and, with two little cans, it will all be over"; this is how Álvarez cold-bloodedly told his partner in crime to smuggle in the two containers with enough C-4 explosive to kill thousands of people and destroy the world-famous nightclub.

There is testimonial, expert and documentary evidence of the channels and methods employed by Álvarez to send money to Cuba. It was handed over to emissaries responsible for introducing it into our country for terrorist activities and received by mercenaries within the country.

Cuba wishes to recall that, for half a century, successive United States Governments have organized, encouraged and allowed numerous terrorist attacks against Cuba, making victims also of other countries' nationals. These attacks have resulted in the death of 3,478 Cubans and disabled a further 2,099, with material losses amounting to billions of dollars.

If the new United States Administration really wants to show its commitment to combating terrorism, it should take a firm stand, without double standards, against terrorist organizations and individuals that, like Luis Posada Carriles and Santiago Álvarez Fernández-Magriña, have been attacking Cuba all this time from United States territory.

The United States Government is in a position to see that justice is done and to release immediately the five Cuban anti-terrorist fighters who, even though, with extraordinary altruism and bravery, they were merely trying to obtain information on terrorist groups in Miami in order to prevent acts of violence and save the lives

of Cuban and United States citizens, have been held as political prisoners for more than 10 years in high-security prisons.

It is up to the United States Government to prove to its own and the international public that it is able to put aside the mean-spirited interests of anti-Cuban cliques in order to defend the real interests of its own people and of the international community. It has the powers to decide to stop using the issue of terrorism for political ends and to refrain from the unjust and unfounded inclusion of Cuba in the list of countries that allegedly sponsor terrorism.

I have the honour to request you to have this letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 106, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Pedro **Núñez Mosquera**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative